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ABSTRACT

A training effort to upgrade the competencies of classroom teachers in program evaluation at the local school level was undertaken by the Division of Research and Development of the Cleveland Public Schools during the Spring of 1971. The model for this training effort was the Evaluation Liaison Teacher Plan, which provided for assignment of an Evaluation Liaison Teacher to each school to serve as a resource for the school staff in assessment of its programs. The model was implemented in connection with the summer school programming offered in Cleveland's Title I schools during the summer of 1971. This model evolved from involving assumptions: (1) the recognition of the classroom teacher as the key facilitator of instruction and its evaluation; (2) utilization of in-line administrative channels to support evaluative processes through emphasis of the principal's responsibility at the school level; and (3) Placement of responsibility for instructional evaluation in the classroom. Operationally, major program elements included: (1) assignment of an evaluation liaison teacher to serve each school, (2) design of protocol materials and training mediums in application of evaluation to school programs, and (3) provision of "hands-on" training for liaison teachers in various aspects of evaluation. At the end of the program, questionnaires were distributed randomly to participants and school staff and to 48 evaluation liaison teachers. About three out of four teachers believed the plan should be continued. Sixty-seven percent of the elementary teachers and 72 percent of the secondary teachers were in favor of the idea of an evaluation liaison teacher in each building. At least one out of two fellow staff members of teachers were also in favor of the program. (CK)

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MODEL FOR UPGRADING PROGRAM EVALUATION
AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL

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MODEL FOR UPGRADING PROGRAM EVALUATION
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The Project

A training effort to upgrade the competencies of classroom teachers in program evaluation at the local school level was undertaken by the Division of Research and Development of the Cleveland Public Schools during the Spring of 1971. The model for this training effort was the Evaluation Liaison Teacher Plan. This Plan provided for assignment of an Evaluation Liaison Teacher to each school to serve as a resource for the school staff in assessment of its programs. The model was implemented in connection with the summer school programming offered in Cleveland's Title I schools during the summer of 1971. The summer school setting provided a microcosm of the usual massive planning and development processes involved in the regular on-going school program. It offered a clearly delimited program focus, a feasible number of staff and pupils for communication purposes, and reduced time and space arrangements. With the summer school program serving as a field test for the plan, effects of the training components of the plan on classroom teachers' evaluation of instructional programs were assessed in various dimensions by staff members of the Division of Research and Development.¹

¹See reports: Cleveland Public Schools
Division of Research and Development, 1972

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|---------------------|--|
| Derek Taylor - | Developing Instructional Objectives--Results of a Training Method for School Personnel |
| Ofelia Halasa - | Design and Application of Protocol Materials for Data Analysis |
| Hallie Francies - | Changes in Attitudes of School Personnel Toward Components of an Evaluation Program |
| Marian T. Kilbane - | Assessing Inservice Impact Through Analysis of Evaluation Reports |

Rationale

This effort emerged from concern about those information voids related to the ways things turn out in educational programs. Experience has reinforced our idea that a practical step toward improvement of these programs might be accomplished through upgrading the teachers' evaluation competencies. The lack of precision with which teachers have gone about evaluating pupils' progress has been a recurring weakness in the instructional process. Few beginning teachers come to the classroom with developed skill in evaluation. Experience has been no guarantee that they will acquire appropriate levels of expertise. Usually evaluation efforts in the classroom and at the school level have been hand-me-down procedures at best. Doubts beset us in setting such a target not only because of the magnitude of the training program that would be necessary but also for a variety of reasons associated with the imperfections and frailties of evaluation techniques as we knew them.

Despite our uncertainties, the program gained form and became an undertaking focused on the teacher as the central person in any educational effort. It considered the teacher to be the key person--the decision maker about classroom instruction and student progress. It speculated about the ways in which teachers might more effectively assess effects of their instruction with an eye to improving the same. The program's target, therefore, became the development of teachers' evaluation skills. The means for accomplishment of this objective was to be through the provision of an evaluation liaison teacher who would be trained to serve as a resource at each school.

Bloom, Hastings, and Madaus (1971) have synthesized perspectives toward revitalizing evaluative procedures to improve learning.¹ Based on a view of education as a "process which changes learners," their commitment is that such change requires specification of ways in which students will be altered as well as techniques by which teachers can assess attainment of desired outcomes. They explain their intent as presenting a broader view of evaluation and its place in education. Their framework considers:

1. Evaluation as a method of acquiring and processing the evidence needed to improve the student's learning and the teaching.
2. Evaluation as including a great variety of evidence beyond the usual final paper and pencil examination.
3. Evaluation as an aid in clarifying the significant goals and objectives of education and as a process for determining the extent to which students are developing in these desired ways.
4. Evaluation as a system of quality control to which it may be determined at each step in the teaching-learning process whether the process is effective or not, and if not, what changes must be made to ensure its effectiveness before it is too late.
5. Finally, evaluation as a tool in education practice for ascertaining whether alternative procedures are equally effective or not in achieving a set of educational ends.¹

Their philosophy provided the foundation for our model to improve program evaluation by classroom teachers. The model, the Evaluation Liaison Teacher Plan, evolved from certain key assumptions which, it was proposed, would facilitate the process and result in improved learning for children. These assumptions involved the following:

¹Bloom, Benjamin et al, Formative and Summative Evaluation of Pupil Learning, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971

1. Recognition that the classroom teacher is the key facilitator of instruction and its evaluation;
2. Utilization of in-line administrative channels to support evaluative processes through emphasis of the principal's responsibility at the school level;
3. Placement of responsibility for instructional evaluation in the classroom.

The Plan

During the past two years, a tradition of sorts has emerged with respect to summer school programming in Cleveland's Title I Schools. Each school staff, in collaboration with its local School Advisory Committee, has had responsibility for undertaking planning and development of the summer school program for their school. With the adoption of a model for curriculum reform and improvement (Toward Dynamic Curriculum) by the Cleveland Board of Education in July, 1970, local advisory committees on curriculum priorities have been organized for each elementary school. These committees, chaired by a lay person, have been structured so that a majority of members include parents and community members from the school attendance areas. Remaining members are school staff who have been elected by their colleagues. The committees through monthly meetings provide input about needs and advise on priorities for curriculum in the local school. They are charged with providing a monthly report of their decisions to the office of the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. School Advisory Committees, generally, have had emerging roles in providing planning input for school programs--most noticeably for those designed for summer school implementation. As a spin-off from this planning and development

activity at the local school level, the idea that evaluation of the program effects should also be undertaken at the local school for the summer school program came into its own.

Operationally, major program elements included:

- . Assignment of an evaluation liaison teacher to serve each school;
- . Design of protocol materials and training mediums in application of evaluation to school programs;
- . Provision of "hands-on" training for liaison teachers in various aspects of evaluation;
- . Development of a multiplier effect for staff training by using evaluation liaison teachers as resources for in-service at local schools;
- . Provision of supportive services through consultation with staff of the Division of Research and Development.

Each evaluation liaison teacher was assigned to a consultant from the staff of the Division of Research and Development. The consultants provided counsel about all aspects of the evaluative process. They assisted in obtaining evaluation materials, both commercial and locally designed instruments, and training manuals. Often, they participated in in-service meetings at the local school for the classroom teachers. Consultants were available for phone consultation.

Although the management procedures in each summer school differed according to the operational style of the principal in charge, evaluation liaison teachers, generally, provided supportive services in the areas of development of instructional objectives, data collection, data analysis techniques, and reporting procedures. Evaluation liaison teachers functioned in an expanded time frame of an average of five

hours per week for which they received the going rate of reimbursement. They carried on their usual school teaching assignments as well. Chart I delineates the responsibilities for the evaluation liaison teachers. (See page 7).

CHART I

Training Procedures

A series of four training sessions were provided for the evaluation liaison teachers and any principals who wished to attend.

The in-service training was done throughout the spring semester in time periods of two hours. A packet was provided for each school which contained practice and source materials.

Focus of the four meetings included:

1. Orientation to responsibilities of the Evaluation Liaison Teacher and the development of instructional objectives.

. At this meeting a skit using a slide-tape medium provided training in the writing of instructional objectives. A self-instruction training packet with criterion reference tests on the material was provided for each school.

2. Data Collection Procedures

. A collection of tests, rating scales, attitude instruments such as the semantic differential was displayed. Both commercially made instruments and others designed by the staff of the Division of Research and Development were made available. The elements of teacher-made tests were demonstrated. Time was provided during

CHART I

EVALUATION LIAISON TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Works under direction of summer school principal.
2. Serves as resource person at the local school level.
3. Provides assistance to school staff in--
 - . Developing program objectives
 - . Identifying data collection methods
 - . Organizing means for collection of information
 - . Compiling information for analysis
 - . Applying techniques for data analysis
4. Develops objectives for evaluation for groups, school.
5. Prepares evaluation report.
6. Attends required in-service meetings.
7. Acts as liaison in evaluation matters between summer school, office of summer school supervisor, Division of Research and Development.

the session for small group and individual consultation between the Division consultants and liaison teachers.

3. Data Analysis Techniques

. This meeting took the form of a Stat Fair in which groups moved through five mini courses in data analysis techniques. They were provided analysis techniques through programmed materials for five areas:

- . measures of central tendency and dispersion
- . methods of graphic presentation
- . sign test
- . spearman rank correlation
- . correlated t-test

4. Procedures for Evaluation Reports

. The fourth meeting delineated reporting procedures, distributing the report forms required by the State of Ohio for Title I projects as well as the plan for local reports.

At the first and fourth meetings a semantic differential instrument was completed by all participants to measure the changes in attitudes of school personnel participating in the program.²

² See report by Dr. Hallie Francies, Changes in Attitudes of School Personnel Toward Components of an Evaluation Program, Cleveland Public Schools, Division of Research and Development, 1972.

Epilogue

In general, the evaluation liaison teacher model proved workable. It demonstrated that responsibility for evaluation can be delegated to local school personnel, that large-scale training programs in evaluation are feasible, and that support through central staff consultation appears to result in more effective instruction for children.

Opinion of participants and the school staff they served were collected by means of a questionnaire directed to a randomly selected sample. Returns were received from 111 elementary teachers and 48 secondary teachers. In addition, 48 evaluation liaison teachers completed questionnaires.

Key findings reveal:

1. About three out of four teachers at both elementary and secondary level believed the Evaluation Liaison Teacher Plan should be continued for future summer schools.
2. Staff saw the Evaluation Liaison Teachers assisting with duties for which the staff believed they were responsible. These included assisting school staff with planning objectives, evaluating program for entire school, providing assistance and data for reports, and distributing supplies and organizational information.
3. Sixty-seven per cent of the elementary teachers and 72 per cent of the secondary teachers were in favor of the idea of an evaluation liaison teacher in each building.
4. They reported they believed that at least one out of two of their fellow staff members were also in favor of the program.
5. The staff saw the services provided by the Evaluation Liaison Teachers as affecting the summer school program by encouraging formation of specific objectives and coordinating the evaluation.

6. Lack of time due to teaching assignments of the Evaluation Liaison Teacher emerged as the most important weakness of the program.

7. Program uniformity, help for teachers in compiling progress information, coordination of data collection, and provision of a person who presents "no-threat" relationship were cited as most important strengths of the program.

About three out of four (74 per cent) Evaluation Liaison Teachers replying to the questionnaire said they would serve again in that capacity. In the view of two out of three of the Evaluation Liaison Teachers (62 per cent) instruction was improved because of their work.

Approximately a year later, a review of the appointment lists indicates that about one out of two Evaluation Liaison Teachers had accepted these posts again for the 1972 Summer Schools in Cleveland Schools.